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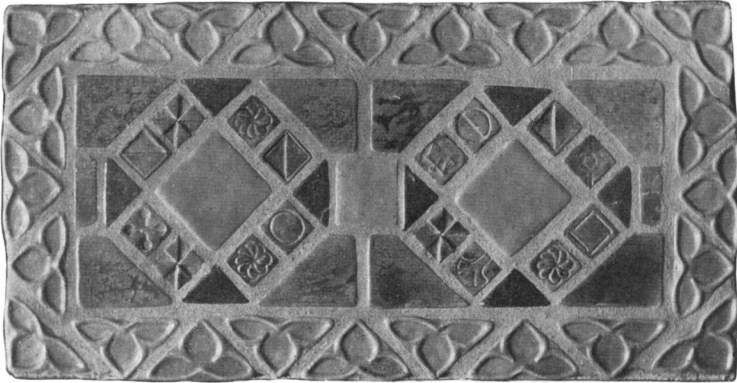
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"without honor" in this case or not, had the other bidders presented designs as appropriate, one can not tell; suffice it to say, the award was finally given to Miss Perry, and soon now the Cathedral will be ready for the pavement.

And so through such quickening spirits are the "arts and crafts" born again, and, in a new sense, coming to occupy

the attention of the world. He can no longer be estimated an excellent workman who can only work excellently; for his work, to prove that it is living, must be generative, and it will not be generative unless the workman has in his mind a clear concept of its possibilities and brings to his task patience and industry, as well as enthusiasm.



## A NEEDED PROFESSION

BY FRANK JEWETT MATHER, JR.

OUR primary, democratic arts are architecture and the drama, for the very good reason that everybody lives and nearly everybody works under a roof, and everybody goes to the theater. Any hope of notable accomplishment in the arts probably lies for the present in these two. The others, with the possible exception of illustration, are, as yet, secondary and socially unimportant. In twenty years' study of the history of art and observation of that of today, it has been borne in upon me increasingly that every notable artistic accomplishment implies an eager and intelligent economic demand. Where the demand is limited and capricious the product is low in vitality, hence in beauty. Illustrations crowd upon one. During the Italian Renaissance pretty much everyone wanted painting and sculpture, and those arts

flourished magnificently. For literature and the drama there was a limited aristocratic demand and in these fields nothing was produced that fairly represented the greatness of the time. A little later, in England, France, and Spain, there was a keen demand for theatrical performances, and the drama thrived mightily, whereas the graphic and plastic arts remained relatively in abeyance. The philistine citizens of the Dutch Republic had small use for literature, the theater, and sculpture; and naturally little of consequence in these lines was vouchsafed them. They craved, however, portraiture of themselves and of their surroundings, and a pictorial art uniquely perfect within its limitations arose. In view of these facts I cannot but think it significant that while the contribution of the average American to painter and

sculptor is negligible, everyone of us pays a substantial annual tax to actor, theater manager, building contractor, and someone who, if only by courtesy, may be regarded as an architect. I do not forget that the finest art is always in a sense highly individual and aristocratic, but history teaches that this superlative product normally is just the fine flower of a sterling popular art. Notwithstanding that both the theater and architecture today may seem rather hopelessly plebificated, it is to them that we must look for the art of tomorrow. In them a vital ferment is apparent, and signs of progress are not lacking. Year by year the commercial stage produces a better class of new plays and of revivals, while in the past twenty-five years a generation of highly trained architects has grown to maturity. The art of architectural design, to be sure, has been cast into momentary confusion through the imposition of materials and engineering problems for which no tradition existed. But already we can see a kind of order emerging from the confusion. Our architects will be able to cope with the skyscraper whenever clients will concede the time for thoughtful design.

But as compared with the playwright, the architect has the grave disadvantage that his work goes uncriticized. No newspaper of any repute fails to give its readers a goodly amount of dramatic news, and many furnish as well dramatic criticism of serious quality. In twenty American cities the new plays are passed on, as a matter of course, by a trained critic, while building after building of monumental pretensions rises without journalistic notice except as to its costliness and convenience. It sometimes seems as if there were a conspiracy to ignore the architect the moment his plans and specifications are accepted. The cost of the building, the contractor, the prospective tenants, the workmen who strike while it is in progress, the petty politician who makes the dedicatory address, all this is news. But mention of the architect who merely contributed all the taste and most of the brains is not news,

and a discussion of the building in its appropriateness for its purpose and attractiveness to the eye would not be news. Here is implied a glaring disregard of relative values. For every insignificant show of mediocre pictures, held last winter in New York, half a dozen considerate notices could be unearthed from the newspaper files. You will search them in vain for competent criticism of such splendid structures as the New York Public Library and the Pennsylvania Station. Apparently neither our critics nor our intelligent public know our most significant art when they see it.\*

For our architects the situation is a serious one. They lose much more than mere credit and publicity; with this, though they have fairly earned it, they could dispense. They are deprived of a much more necessary thing, of a public opinion that should scrutinize their work alertly and be alive to its quality as art. To train such a public is the specific duty of criticism. Without this kindled popular interest, without a public opinion of a somewhat discerning kind, no great art ever has existed. Whether such criticism be written, or, as in Athens and Florence, is talked, does not matter. The important thing is that an art which can look only to its own practitioners for appreciation must fall into anemic academism, whereas a vigorous art presupposes the active approbation and, on occasion, equally ready dissent of the intelligent community. The American architect is in the paradoxical position of having plenty of clients and no real public, whereas the painter possibly gains a public more easily than clients, and the playwright enjoys both, if in a chaotic form. In other words, critical attention and public enthusiasm are aroused among us in inverse ratio to the amount of taste and intelligence employed. Of course this paradox rests after all on a kind of rough logic. The public crowds to the theaters and freely

\* Mr. Montgomery Schuyler's excellent critique of the new Pennsylvania Station, in the *International Studio* for October, has appeared since these words were written.

discusses the play because it has the happy assurance, generally a correct one, that the play is not that bothersome thing art. For the same reason, criticism turns without misgivings to a field in which no recondite standards seem involved, but simply those of life itself. Contrariwise, the public accords a distant veneration to painting and sculpture because they are emphatically that mysterious thing which is art. And the critic of these subjects is vaguely esteemed even when he is not read, since the average man feels that after all the critic is explaining something that needs interpretation. But our house art—the libraries in which we read—the schools to which we send our children—the skyscrapers in which we have our offices—the banks in which our money is kept—these things are so much part and parcel of us that to class them as art would alienate them from us disconcertingly. And yet until this realization that the things nearest us, the things we have paid for with our cash, the very carriage of our bodies and intonation of our voices are not quite our own but subject to the law of pleasing others, until some such realization that beauty is a very practical, everyday, and necessary ingredient of life becomes general, art must remain an isolated phenomenon most misunderstood perhaps when most distantly revered.

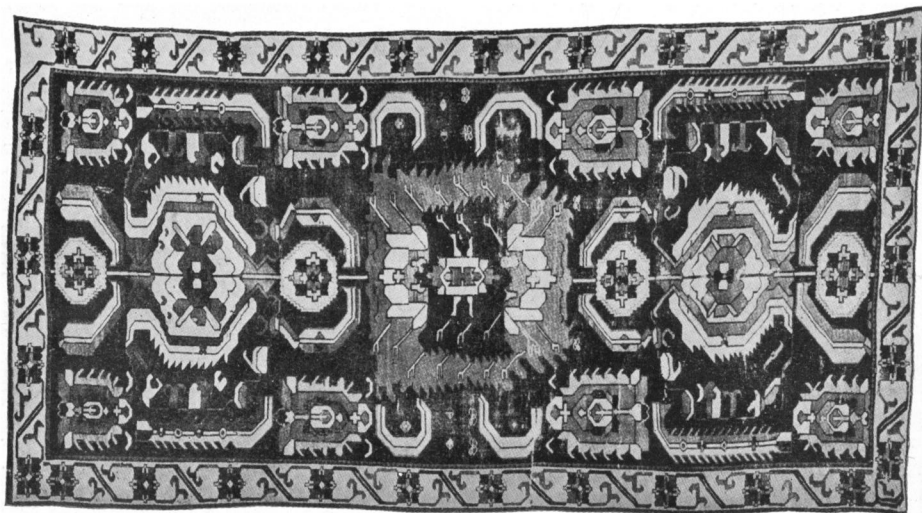
How to change a sluggish or merely commercial attitude toward architecture into one of active appreciation is our problem. In the long run presumably the fine buildings will speak for themselves. Our children and grandchildren will surely rejoice in structures which, through representing our own energy, we regard with languid eye. But criticism can do much to hasten the day of appreciation, can produce conditions in which more fine buildings are likely to be designed, can powerfully reinforce the mute appeal of the work of art itself. And we need beside the occasional criticism of writers for the magazines, and the professional criticism of the architectural journals, the iterative effect of the writer for the daily press. It is he

who by constant impact and irritation really makes opinion. The pen of a Krehbiel and a Finck was only less potent than the baton of a Thomas and a Seidl in revealing to America the complicated beauty of Wagner's music. A similar triumph awaits the writer who will persuasively set forth the principles and problems of architecture, applying such ideas to our own buildings as they rise. How shall we get such a critic?

The obvious answer is: Let our present art critics add architecture to their daily task, and if necessary make time and space for it by ignoring the more inconsequential exhibitions of paintings. Gradually, I think, this will come about, and a newspaper critic unversed in architecture will seem as maimed as one who should avow ignorance of sculpture. But we must begin with facts as they are. Of the more scholarly art critics of New York and Boston, for example, I recall only one who has any special training in the architectural field. I have been urged to undertake architectural notices myself, and have been deterred by the difficulty of mastering the structural point of view, by consciousness of predilection for obsolete styles, and finally by the pressure of routine duties. In short, a young art critic with flexibility might well risk a step too difficult for one who has settled into the professional harness. As a beginning, at least, it is very desirable that our popular critic of architecture should have had some practical training in that art. A retired architect might do such work well, but even better were a neophyte who had yearned towards the rival call of letters. Such a man would bring a greater flexibility of appreciation to bear, and would be more likely to master the somewhat difficult technique of literary journalism. The older critic would be too likely merely to add to the mass of respectable professional comment that already exists quite apart from the consciousness or curiosity of the average cultivated person. I have lately been reading an unpretentious book, "One Hundred Country Houses," by a young architect,

Aymar Embury II. In hundreds of instances he points out concretely what are the features of an average residence that show thoughtfulness in design, knack in pleasing the eye while satisfying every consideration of economy and utility. Whoever reads this little book with any care will look at houses with new eyes, will realize that when good they do not just grow but embody that kind of controlled enthusiasm and fervent ingenuity which is the essence of art. Now if one could add to Mr. Embury's quiet and lucid way of explaining his subject something of the fighting quality of the higher journalist, one would have just the thing

required. A critic combining these qualities of lucidity and eloquence would not fail to create his public and to affect it profoundly. For the matter lies, after all, very near the real interest of all of us. We need rather to be waked up to our own immediate concerns than to be initiated into remote allegiances. When we are fully alive to the beauty that is nearest us the architect will find a new inspiration, and his work, retaining the scholarly and delicate accent of our best current design, will assume that vigor and importance which an art never quite finds in itself but must draw from the hearts and minds of a people.



CENTRAL ASIA MINOR

XVTH CENTURY

BY PERMISSION OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM AND THE OWNER, MR. THEODORE M. DAVIS

## EARLY ORIENTAL RUGS

AN EXHIBITION AT THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

A SPECIAL exhibition of early Oriental rugs is being held by the Metropolitan Museum, opening on November 1st and closing on the 15th of January. Fifty rugs, the majority of which have been lent by private collectors, are in-

cluded in this exhibition which is set forth in the large central gallery of Wing E—the same in which less than a year ago the special Whistler exhibition was held.

It would be difficult to over-estimate